



State of Connecticut

DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES

OFFICE OF CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER
30 TRINITY STREET - 4th Floor
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106

DEBORAH DEL PRETE SULLIVAN
LEGAL COUNSEL/EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT PUBLIC DEFENDER
(860) 509-6405 Telephone
(860) 509-6495 Fax
deborah.d.sullivan@jud.ct.gov

**Testimony of
Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel
Office of Chief Public Defender
*Raised Bill No. 6708***

**An Act Concerning Criminal Cases of Persons Who Have
Returned From Service with the Armed Forces
Judiciary Committee Public Hearing
March 24, 2009**

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports *Raised Bill No. 6708, An Act Concerning Criminal Cases of Persons Who Have Returned from Service with the Armed Forces*. However, if passed, there will be a need for additional personnel and resources for the Division of Public Defender Services. Many G.A. offices are currently over the Public Defender Services Caseload Goals as adopted in accordance with the settlement agreement in *Rivera v. Rowland*, and are already overburdened by numerous specialty dockets, which include motor vehicle, youthful offender, and domestic violence. These factors increase the risk that the Division will provide indigent defendants with ineffective assistance of counsel.

If additional resources were appropriated, this Office, as in the past, would be in favor of passage of this bill which provides diversion and additional support for veterans. The Division is a long-standing participant in the annual veterans' "Stand Down" event in Rocky Hill, at which many state agencies, including the courts, collaborate to provide numerous services to homeless veterans. With additional resources, the Division could better assist veterans involved in the criminal justice system and insure that they receive the increased mental health and/or substance abuse treatment that the bill contemplates.